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THE MONTHLY GULL BULLETIN

Volume 53 Berkeley, Calif. June 1971 Number 6

REMINDER: ANNUAL DINNER JUNE 10

Golden Gate Audubon Society's annual dinner-meeting and election of officers will be held on **Thursday, June 10,** in the Vista Room of the Lakeside Garden Center (near Children's Fairyland), Oakland. Try to arrive about **6:30;** dinner will begin at **7 p.m.** The deadline for reservations is June 7. For reservations write to Mrs. Ray Ericson, 222 LaSalle Ave., Piedmont 94610 (832-2330). Please clip or copy the form below, and send it to Mrs. Ericson with your check payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society. (Tickets will not be sent; a list of names will be at the door, and your check is your receipt.)

Enclosed is my check for $ ..... for ..... dinners at $4.25.

Name..... Phone.....

Address .....

Our speaker will be Dr. James Naviaux of Pleasant Hill. He will discuss after-care of oil-contaminated birds and suggest possible new ways in which citizens can act to help preserve our wildlife. To reach the Garden Center, turn off Grand Avenue onto Bellevue Avenue.

COVEL'S CONSERVATION CORNER

We were shocked to learn from the April Newsletter of the Sierra Club Wildlife Subcommittee that several northern California counties still pay bounties on bobcats and coyotes, as well as for jays, magpies, and crows. For example, Tehama County supervisors were convinced by hunters that coyotes had depleted the deer population! Sounds as though they need some grass-roots conservation education up that way.

State Senator Peter Behr of Marin has introduced SB 722, asking that the Tule Elk herd be maintained at a minimum of 2,000. This would mean that part of the Owens Valley cattle leases would have to be cancelled. Your Conservation Chairman is personally most anxious to see new elk range developed on San Luis Isle National Wildlife Refuge north of Los Banos and on the Pt. Reyes National Seashore.

Probably few members are aware that wildlife on the Farallon Is-

lands is inadequately protected, even though Southeast Farallon Island has been declared a National Wildlife Refuge and wilderness status is being considered for the entire island group. Research teams from PRBO have reported the shooting of sea lions from passing boats and the collection of shellfish from the rocks directly beneath cliffs on whieh colonies of sea birds nest. Senator Milton Marks has introduced SB 297 and SJR 15, both of which would grant the island wildlife greater protection, and reeently President Nixon asked that the Farallones be placed under refuge status. Additional protection is welcome, but where will enforcement eome from?

Audubon Canyon Ranch money-raisers and other Marin County conservationists are trying to find monies to buy certain Tomales Bay marsh and tide lands. More power to them! There is growing sentiment among Golden Gate members for marsh acquisition in the East Bay, though it is scarce and priced high. We had all better pull for the proposed South Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which at time of writing seems to be hung up in the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. (The Refuge Committee has concluded that the basic problem is inaction on the part of the sponsors of HR 111, Congressmen Edwards, Burton, Dellums, Gubser, Leggett, Moss, and Waldie. We need *action* if the dream is to become a reality.—ED.)

Your Chairman attended a hearing on Richmond's proposed deep-water harbor on April 14, chaired by Colonel Charles Roberts of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. The plan calls for a breakwater and considerable disruptive dredging around Brooks Island, which is being purchased as an East Bay Regional Park with accent on Indian history. The entire development would depend on approval of plans to deepen Bay channels as part of the Baldwin Ship Channel to Stockton. This plan is being resisted by many conservationists and sportsmen.

Civic leaders and spokesmen for minority unemployed in the depressed community of Richmond offered a compelling argument in favor of this project—the promise of some 330 directly created jobs and some 666 indirectly created jobs for each container ship. Conservationist spokesmen argued that small boat marinas, fishing facilities, and related services would provide more year-round jobs for local workers than new eommercial docks. It would help both sides if eonservationists could furnish facts and figures to prove their contentions, rather than make such assertions as "One man can unload a container ship." Port operators and planners have their facts well marshalled and available to all. Conservationists might bear in mind that it is difficult, if not impossible, for poor people to enjoy parks, beaches, and wildlife on empty stomachs.

California must find a way to attain full employment without progressive destruction of her remaining natural and scenic resources. An answer to this challenge is outlined in "The California Tomorrow Plan," which can be obtained for $1.00 from California Tomorrow, 681 Market St., San Francisco 94105. I recommend reading it. It will at least enlarge your perspectives.—PAUL F. COVEL, *Conservation Chmn.*

FIELD TRIPS FOR JUNE

Sat. June 12—To Alum Rock Park in the hills east of San Jose. Approach via Freeway 101, exit at Alum Rock Avenue, and drive 5 miles to the entrance. When you come to the sign *Narrow Bridge*, make a left turn and follow the road for a few hundred yards to a large parking lot that over looks that picnic grounds. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** Bring lunch. Look for orioles while waiting for the group to gather. Leader, Allen Smith.

Wed. June 16—To Briones Regional Park. From Oakland take Highway 24 and exit at Orinda. Turn left, go under the highway overpass, and travel north on Camino Pablo. At Bear Creek Road, make a right turn and go 4 miles to the park entrance. Meet at **9 a.m.** Bring lunch. Leader, Tom Oczkewecz (564-2833).

Sat.-Sun. June 19-20—Come on a camping trip and enjoy the birds of the Sierra Nevada. Drive via Highway 80 to Truckee, then turn north onto Highway 89. In 25 miles you intersect Highway 49 at Sierraville. Turn left onto 49 and go 6 miles to Yuba Pass, where the group will gather at **9 a.m.**, Saturday morning. A second meeting place this day will be at **12 noon** at the intersection of 49 and Gold Lakes Road (8 miles west of Yuba Pass). Our Campsite will be on Highway 49 at Chapman Creek Campground, midway between the two meeting places. Get your campsite early if possible; it may be crowded. Other campsites are at Yuba Pass and Lincoln Creek. If you prefer a motel, try Sid's in Sierraville (994-8992) or in Truckee. Bring camping equipment, food, and warm clothes. Leader, Marie Mans, 3713 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette (284-7681).

Sat. June 26—To Redwood Regional Park in the hills behind Oakland. Take the MacArthur Freeway to the 35th Avenue exit, turn left and follow 35th Avenue uphill (it soon becomes Redwood Road), cross over Freeway 13, and proceed up the grade. Cross Skyline Blvd., drive down Redwood Road for 2 miles, and stop at the MacDonald Trail Parking Lot. Meet at **9 a.m.** Bring lunch and interested friends. Leader, Henry Hoffman.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Briones Park. Twenty-five members and friends had a perfect spring day for the field trip to the west side of Briones Regional Park on April 4. Among the 40 species identified were Bullock's Orioles, the first of the year for most of us. They and Western Bluebirds were colorful on the blossoming fruit trees at the Pear Orchard Picnic Area. Here we watched an aerial display by Red-tailed Hawks; later, on the trail, we saw Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks. The wildflowers were a high point on this day, with lupines and poppies coloring the slopes and hills of the approach to the park. On the Nature Trail, trilliums were abundant and in the height of bloom, ferns were fiddle-necking out, and many other woodland wildflowers were to be seen. Parts of the trail were white with the fallen blossoms of Madrone, which were in full bloom among the various greens of Bay, Maple, Oak, and Buckeye. Orange-crowned Warblers were both seen and heard, and we saw Allen's as well as Anna's Hummingbirds. Also

observed were an occupied, pendulous Bushtit nest and a pair of Hutton's Vireos building a nest.

—BERTHA UNDERHILL & PETER VEITCH, *Leaders.*

Kirby Cove. The two trips to Kirby Cove (April 10 & 15) were outstanding for beauty of scenery; the views of the ocean, the rugged cliffs, and the green hillsides, all under a bright sun, were magnificent. The wildflowers put on quite a display, at times taking precedence over the birds. Some of the birds seen were American Goldfinch, Wrentit, Purple Finch, White-throated Swift, Red-tailed Hawk, Rufous-sided Towhee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Common Loon, and Wandering Tattler.

—MRS. HUBERT FRY & PAT TRIGGS, *Leaders.*

Sunol Park. About a dozen members turned out for the level walk through Sunol Regional Park on April 17, a cold and windy day after a rain. Many in the group were eager to see an eagle, and see one we did. Perched high in a tree on the ridge west of the valley when first spotted, the bird remained there for several minutes before it finally kicked off and began circling to gain altitude. Once airborne, the bird was easily identified as an adult Golden Eagle. Before it had much time to gain altitude, we were fortunate to witness two brief but exciting examples of avian aggression. The first came when two Red-tailed Hawks dive-bombed the eagle (a good opportunity for size comparison); the second came shortly after, when a Sparrow Hawk went for one of the Red-tails. White-throated Swift, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Magpie, Hutton's, Solitary, and Warbling Vireos, Orange-crowned and Yellow Warblers, Bullock's Oriole, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow were among the nearly 50 species seen or heard (Marie Mans identified a good many species by ear).—DICK JOHNSON, *Leader.*

McCoy Ranch, Arroyo Mocho. On April 25, a bright, sunny day, about fifty people turned out for this trip in the Livermore Valley. We saw more than 30 species in all, including Phainopeplas, Lewis' Woodpeckers, Western Kingbirds, four Golden Eagles, several Greater Yellowlegs in the creek, Bullock's Orioles, Bank Swallows, Yellow, Orange-crowned, and Wilson's Warblers, and Cedar Waxwings. We were especially happy to welcome back to the Bay Area Hilda and Carl Sather. Carl, an outstanding birder, is a former GGAS director. Since his retirement several years ago, he and Hilda have birdwatched throughout the United States.

—AILEEN PIERSON, *Leader.*

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

A *Red-necked Grebe* in breeding plumage at Little River mouth, Mendocino County, on April 12—Loring Dales.

Shearwaters, numbering at least 100,000, were observed off the coast of Pacifica on the weekend of April 17-18—Ray Higgs. Since these birds remain offshore throughout our summer, birders should occasionally be able to observe them from shore between now and October at Sharp Park Beach and other accessible vantage points.

An adult *Little Blue Heron* in the "Marshland Preserve" south of Palo Alto Yacht Harbor on April 30—found by Dave DeSante's ornithology students.

Blue-winged Teal in Coyote Hills Regional Park, April 6—Elsie Roemer and Thaire Adamson. A pair of *Blue-winged Teal* at Rodeo Lagoon, April 11—Val and Bob DaCosta.

The *King Eider* was still in Monterey Harbor in April—Garth Alton

The *Hooded Merganser* remained on Jewel Lake, Tilden Park, until mid-April.

On April 18 three adult *Golden Eagles* were observed over Rodeo Lagoon by Val and Bob DaCosta. A Red-tailed Hawk was attacking a *Golden Eagle* in flight over the Mines Road, Livermore, on April 22. Several times the eagle flipped over and turned his talons toward the hawk—observed by 5 GGAS members.

A flock of *Lesser Yellowlegs* accompanied Greater Yellowlegs in Coyote Hills Regional Park during the first week of April—Bud Fry and Garth Alton.

On April 7 Jim and Charlotte Clayton found a *pair of Spotted Owls* near Muir Woods on Mt. Tamalpais. On April 13 about 11 a.m. several GGAS members saw these two owls "billing" in the tree tops in the same area. A Spotted Owl was observed there again on April 18 and 21.

Black Swifts were flying with White-throated Swifts over Rodeo Lagoon on April 18—Val and Bob DaCosta.

An *albino* Robin was building a nest near the reservoir at Rockridge Shopping Center, Oakland, in April—Mrs. Betty Silva.

Tri-colored Blackbirds were observed by Elsie Roemer and Thaire Adamson in Coyote Hills Regional Park on April 6.

A male *Hooded Oriole* returned to Liberty Street near Fairmount in El Cerrito in mid-April—Bertha Underhill et al.

Cassin's Finch was on Mt. Tamalpais on April 21—Ann Follis.

A singing *White-throated Sparrow* remained in the San Francisco garden of Mr. and Mrs. Follis through April 25.

—VI HOMEM, *Observations Editor* (339-1886).

AUDUBON NATURE TRAINING

Last month's mention of the need for volunteers netted us an excellent response; to those who volunteered, we extend a hearty thanks.

At special request, Audubon Nature Training has added two workshops and one series of courses for the training of camp counselors. Our schedule for the fall program is in the planning stage at this time; details will appear in a later issue of *The Gull*.

—PHYLLIS LINDLEY, *Nature Training*.

A WATCH ON THE BAY—VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

A new environmental coalition is emerging on the local scene whose twofold purpose might inspire many of our members to volunteer a small amount of their time with great effect. The Save San Francisco Bay Association and several other environmentally concerned organizations have banded together to form small, community-level groups of Bay Watchers. One purpose is to monitor pollution of the Bay; the other, to monitor illegal dumping and filling on bayside lands.

The shoreline of the bay is being divided into sections, and groups of Bay Watchers are being assigned the task of acquainting themselves with the history and present status of the section for which they are responsible, plus the additional job of keeping abreast of future plans that public agencies may have for that section. Groups will appoint liaison members to watchdog public agencies—to attend their public meetings, learn what their powers are, and present environmental concerns before them whenever necessary.

Some groups are still being organized, but others are going great guns. Anyone interested in turning some bird watching into some Bay Watching is urged to write to the Save San Francisco Bay Association and ask for a Bay Watchers form to fill out and return with information on how you might help.

AMCHITKA AGAIN SITE OF NUCLEAR TEST

The Atomic Energy Commission has announced that it plans to explode a nuclear weapon with a force of five million tons of TNT 6,000 feet underground on Amchitka Island—in the Aleutian chain off the coast of Alaska—in early October. This will be the largest underground nuclear test in the history of the United States. Though details are not available, it is understood that this will be a test for an enlarged warhead for the Spartan ABM missile. The 1969 underground nuclear test there was conducted to see if still larger tests could be made; the AEC has concluded it can safely conduct tests in the area with an explosive force up to a limit of 25 megatons without danger of setting off "serious" secondary earthquakes.

So once again the Federal Government is treating the Aleutian Islands as a deserted and expendable wasteland rather than a valuable natural resource. The test is to be conducted right in the midst of the Aleutian wildlife refuge, home of the sea otter, the puffin, and many other species of wildlife. The National Audubon Society is strongly opposed to the conducting of these tests, and particularly so in the absence of any public statement or commitment from the AEC of making the fullest possible long-range impact evaluation and specific plans for all necessary environmental precautions and wildlife protection. Does the AEC

really know what the long-term geological and environmental impact of repeated blasts of such magnitude would be?

AUDUBON LEADER, April 23, 1971

AN EFFORT TO SAVE BIG MORONGO CANYON

The Southern California Chapter of The Nature Conservancy is raising funds to purchase 80 acres along Big Morongo Creek in Big Morongo Canyon, San Bernardino County, Calif. This key acreage is to be added to 160 acres recently purchased by the county for a regional park. Historically, botanically, and zoologically, the area is unique, as it is situated at the "crossroads" of several major vegetation types. The diversity of the area enables it to support a variety of desert animals, including the Desert Bighorn Sheep, which water there. Los Angeles Auduboners have field trips in the canyon, known among birders as a migratory funnel for birds moving north and south. The rare Vermillion Flycatcher has been sighted there.

More than half of the project goal of $25,000 has been raised, but the balance must still be raised before Big Morongo Canyon can be permanently preserved as an unspoiled living museum, for the educational, esthetic, and scientific benefit of generations to come. A Mr. George Olinsy of Beverly Hills has offered to match, dollar for dollar, all gifts toward purchase and protection of the canyon. Thus your gift to the project will create another, equivalent gift. Anyone interested should send a check to The Nature Conservancy, Morongo Canyon Project, P. O. Box 60616, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, Calif. 90060.

AUDUBON GOES TO SCHOOL

Mr. Don B. Woodcock, Jr. a teacher at Tenaya School, Merced, Calif. 95340, has developed a comprehensive curriculum in environmental studies to be used for grades 6 through 12 in the Merced schools. He seeks back issues of *Audubon* magazine, which he regards as one of the best sources of information on natural history to be found. Can you think of a better use for your old magazines?

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gifts of remembrance were made to *Audubon Canyon Ranch*;

In Memory of:	*Gift of*:
Jeff Laurie	Ralph & Margaret Hilton
Frances Malmstrom	Marion Carlson
James W. Reilly	Mr. & Mrs. George Gnau
Marina Ham Scharff	Erline Hevel

A special gift was made to *Audubon Nature Training* by Mrs. John Dang in honor of Bertha Underhill.

Dr. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman.*

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Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC)
Delegates: Joshua Barkin, George Peyton, Jr., Mrs. Richard F. Johnson (addresses above)

Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward THE GULL
Monthly meetings second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership, Local & National $10 per year, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately $2 per year.

High school & college student membership $6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.